

CCC 111 / Microsoft "TEAMS"

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

May 18, 2023

TO: Councillors Angie Parkinson and John Morrison

FROM: Don Bell, Chair

RE: **Thursday, May 18, 2023 6:00 PM**

Pursuant to Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7B, the Community Engagement Committee meeting is accessible through Microsoft "Teams" via this link: [Click here to join the meeting](#) or by calling 929-235-8441 Conference ID: 507 179 740#

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. NOMINATION OF OFFICERS
 - A. Chair
 - B. Secretary
3. ADOPTION OF RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS
4. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETING DATES
5. STORAGE OF RECORDS
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
7. OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK
8. OLD BUSINESS
9. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Review of Structure and Goals of the Community Engagement Committee
 - B. Discussion of Council Social Media Engagement
10. ADJOURNMENT

c: Town Council
Mike Walsh, Mayor

MICROSOFT "TEAMS"
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

JANUARY 6, 2021

PRESENT Don Bell, Chair and Councillor Angie Parkinson

ABSENT Councillor Patricia Harmon and EHHA Board of Commissioners Chair Jim Kate

ALSO Marcia Leclerc, Mayor
PRESENT Eileen Buckheit, Development Director
Saud Anwar, Vice Chair, Housing Committee; Connecticut General Assembly
Esther Clarke, Town Council Minority Leader
Rich Kehoe, Town Council Chair

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 3, 2020

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
seconded by Don Bell
to **approve** the minutes of the December 3, 2020 Community Engagement Committee meeting.
Motion carried 2/0.

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

None

NEW BUSINESS

Improving the Quality of Affordable Housing in East Hartford

Mayor Leclerc and Eileen Buckheit, Development Director discussed the following issues with the Committee:

- The town is not in the business of housing, but we do use the court system, CDBG funds, and the like to help when necessary.

- Recent ordinances established a program (not fully operable yet due to Covid-19) for renters whereby any landlord must go through a review process by the Inspections & Permits Department whenever they are between tenants. This will help people who are renting properties that are substandard.
- Going after blighted properties, acquiring and demolishing them. The court system takes a long time, but eventually it works
- The town has many properties that are not owner-occupied, and these often need attention/monitoring
- Mayor Leclerc stated that the East Hartford Housing Authority does a good job of maintaining their properties. She based this on her experiences with residents and on visiting these properties over time. Veteran's Terrace is also in the process of being renovated.
- **CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program:**
 - Partnership for Strong Communities:
 - total units: 21,300
 - 53% owner-occupied (just below Hartford county average...60%)
 - 54% single-family, detached (and the trend lately, perhaps due to Covid-19, is for people to lease rather than buy)
 - 620 mobile homes
 - 9% 3-4 families
 - 16% affordable - we exceed State of Connecticut requirements
 - 3490 units – with a waiting list for occupancy
 - Aging housing stock – most was built before 1950. Much of it is not in good condition. There's a 90-day mandatory waiting period to demolish a home that's 50+ years old
 - Building permits for new housing - only 3 in recent years, so we don't have "churn" = housing going down, and back up
 - Housing wage is low: \$23.55 (hourly wage that's needed to live there), around \$70,000 for a family of 4
 - Affordable = 30% of your income
- **CDBG Block Grant funds** - we have some for housing rehab
 - Paul O'Sullivan, Grants Administrator, deals with these
 - criteria are sometimes restrictive:
 - 0% loan that's paid back when the property is sold
 - You apply by income level - combined income of all in home must be below 80% of AMI (area median income)
 - No more than 2 active liens on property
 - No outstanding taxes or violations open with the town
 - About 40% of those who apply typically get these
 - There's one for rentals, but they must be owner-occupied
 - Sept 2018-Aug 2019 – East Hartford processed a total of 12 projects, loaning out a total of \$282k (one year it was \$120k, and it does vary)
 - Often these are the larger projects that are more costly and most people struggle to afford, such as roofs (7), furnaces/boilers (5), plumbing, chimney repair, electric work, ADA compliance for front porches (especially in multifamily homes)
 - The town avoids window replacement –when possible – due to the fact that it often involves lead paint abatement, which is extremely costly and depletes funding.

- Senator Saud Anwar, Vice Chair of the Housing Committee spoke on the following:
 - **T-RAP program** - state rental assistance program
 - They've increased the funding from \$10M to \$40M
 - Much of it this year's funding has been depleted due to Covid-19, and CARES Act money ran out on December 30, 2020.
 - CARES Act 2 will be \$200M+.
 - Used for housing related issues, including rental assistance and assistance with utility bills (even retroactive)
 - February 9, 2021 – Executive orders declaring public health emergency expire on this date. If not renewed, the town needs to devise a plan or enact legislation, similar to what the State of New York just authorized, to prevent foreclosures.
 - Senator Anwar is working on a 2nd bill called **EMAP (emergency mortgage assistance program)** - money comes from CHFA, to help landlords of smaller rentals avoid foreclosure
 - Mayor Leclerc is concerned that they may just keep the money and not fix up the housing, letting it fall into disrepair. We need to incentivize owners to improve their properties, or at least keep them up.
 - Rich Kehoe, Town Council Chair suggested that a requirement should be affixed to the program, such as an inspection of the property to ensure that the building is up to code and not in disrepair.
 - Senator Anwar is also working on a **Workforce Housing Bill with Opportunity Zones** – the State should have the same opportunities as the individual who invests a great deal of money into Opportunity Zones. The town can also offer state tax breaks in this program.
 - Municipalities can offer certain people these breaks first - teachers, firefighters, etc. to incentivize them to live in town
 - A-30G says that 10% of housing should be “affordable”. East Hartford is very compliant with the affordability of its housing stock, but other towns are not. Senator Anwar is working on a bill that would give a neighboring town's housing authority the right to claim jurisdiction on properties if that town is not taking care of their share and can start making affordable housing there.
 - Another bill the Senator is working on will require out-of-state investors to have a local, in-state management company to address issues with regard to their housing. Therefore, there is more accountability.
 - Another bill - increases liability when poor housing conditions impact people's health

Questions & Answers

Don Bell: Is there any wiggle room with the CDBG program, or is it all Federal?

- Eileen Buckheit: Not really. We are dealing with Housing & Urban Development.

Don Bell: Is data collected about race when people apply for CDBG grants?

- Eileen Buckheit: yes.

Don Bell: Is information about these programs being navigated to particular communities?

- Eileen Buckheit: we have done a focus on one neighborhood on Silver Lane (identified when we were doing Working Cities as a place that needed attention), and she thinks it went well. There has been a discussion of doing it in Mayberry Village, maybe doing a mailer, etc.
- Mayor: these grants are only for owner-occupied units, and there aren't enough of those

Don Bell: Can people buy homes, tear them down, and build new ones?

- That would be great, but most people cannot afford to do that. It is a rare occurrence in distressed municipalities.
- Also, most of East Hartford is "built-out" meaning there just isn't plenty of developable space available anymore. That is one of the reasons for focusing on new housing stock at the old Showcase Cinema property.

Don Bell: Are there mechanisms that we have or could implement that can make absentee landlords more hands-on?

- Once the program comes online where they have to register with the town, that should help
- If it's really bad, we'll have to use the stick: blight enforcement

Don Bell: Mayor, how do we use the courts to help with housing?

- Mayor: "long, painful, ridiculous". Violators are given chance after chance, and they can challenge the decisions repeatedly, so it takes forever. Now that the courts shut down due to Covid-19, we have lost a year.

Angie Parkinson: What do you think about tax breaks to incentivize owners to occupy their units?

- In 2013, the Mayor sent the "Improving East Hartford" program to the Tax Policy Committee, but it was never approved. Any improvements could be tax exempt as long as they increase the value of the property. However, it won't include windows, etc. And basics like that is what people need before they can consider cosmetic changes.
- Any program would be labor intensive - the labor, record-keeping, etc. for the town to do something like this would be prohibitive
- Rich Kehoe: assessed value assumes everything is in good shape. Your place isn't worth less b/c the roof is run down. He says the real problems are lack of money and lack of caring...and a stingy federal government that needs to loosen requirements for helpful programs. We have the mechanism with our blight ordinance, it's just about the resources it takes to do it all.

Angie Parkinson: Do we have funding or grants set aside to try to purchase properties so we can resell them...just to get them moving?

- Mayor: if the property is blighted, the town can lien it or try to demolish it. Some owners won't give up the property. Therefore the mortgage company could be contacted, and once they see that it's blighted, they might decide to pull out. But that also is extremely time consuming.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Don Bell
 to **adjourn** at 7:34 p.m.
 Motion carried 2/0.

C: Town Council
 Marcia Leclerc, Mayor
 Eileen Buckheit, Development Director
 Saud Anwar, Chair, Housing Committee; Connecticut General Assembly



Town of East Hartford Communications Strategy, Policy and Procedures

Introduction

The Town of East Hartford maintains transparent and honest communication with its constituents. The Town recognizes the value of citizen involvement and the importance of understanding constituent concerns and feedback in order for it to be utilized to enhance the quality of life in the community. It is essential for the Town of East Hartford to follow a strong communications strategy to foster effective two-way communication with constituents. The Town is committed to providing residents with accurate, relevant and up-to-date information in ways that are timely, coherent and accessible for a diverse demographic that makes up the fabric of the Town of East Hartford.

Mission

Our mission is to maintain a transparent government and engage with constituents across multiple platforms to ensure they receive the information they need on various programs, events and services through communication methods that are most applicable to their needs.

Goal

Our primary goal is to build positive relationships with our constituents and restore trust in our government through effective communication strategies based on resident engagement, feedback and best practices.

Strategy

The Town of East Hartford understands that the town's diverse demographic utilizes different methods of communication to receive information. These methods range from digital to traditional, and East Hartford is committed to making public information available to constituents in a variety of ways and through various channels that are most applicable to the needs of our residents and businesses.

In 2014, the Town of East Hartford implemented an official communications program. As part of that program, the Town revamped its official website to make it ADA-compliant and mobile-friendly. The website is updated daily by the Mayor's office and content managers from various East Hartford's departments, to ensure information on programs, services and events is relevant and timely. Various features of the website include an easily updatable event calendar, "news and announcements" section, as well as creative visuals and infographics.

In April of 2016, the Town of East Hartford established social media accounts that are used in addition to the website to disseminate important information to residents and create a two-way communication with them. The social media accounts are linked directly to the website to ensure consistent messaging. As part of its communication strategy, the Town of East Hartford has created a social media policy with the purpose to establish guidelines for the creation and use of social media by the Town, its officials and employees and residents.

The Town also utilizes other communications techniques, software and platforms, which include press releases for traditional print media, a digital display board to attract attention of pedestrians and motor vehicle operators, Survey Monkey online survey platform, Q-Alert "My East Hartford" service management platform and Everbridge "East Hartford Alert Network," – an online notification system.

In 2015, East Hartford began work with Everbridge "East Hartford Alert Network," which can be utilized in case emergency and non-emergency situations. It provides a critical alert management platform that helps organizations manage the full lifecycle of a critical event: Assess risks and determine which are relevant to your assets and people; Locate mobile and traveling employees, as well as responders, who are near or traveling to areas of risk; Act to automate standard operating procedures to launch and manage incident response; and Analyze performance to identify bottlenecks and improve response for subsequent events.

Additionally, the Town of East Hartford contracted with QSend Technologies, Inc., a web-based software for governments to improve citizen service, efficiency and effectiveness of our response as well as to re-engineer processes and measure performance. As part of the contract, the Town purchased citizen request management app and web form database called “My East Hartford,” which allows citizens to easily inform the Town of important issues ranging from property maintenance concerns to road surface issues. The platform streamlines and manages resident requests for service, allowing staff and the public to smoothly track case progress and receive updates. “My East Hartford” is available for smartphone users in the App Store and Google Play as well as on our mobile-friendly Town website, allowing citizens to choose their preferred way of staying connected with the Town and being able to easily submit requests for service in accordance with our mission statement and goals.

All communication tools, techniques and procedures are vetted through the Mayor’s office for consistency purposes in messaging. Each department has at least one individual capable of managing their department’s web-page and a social media page. Those individuals coordinate with the Mayor’s office prior to publishing information on their webpage to streamline the process and ensure consistency in voice. All new communication programs and strategies will also be reviewed by the Mayor’s office prior to their official release.

Official Social Media Guidelines

PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use of social media by the Town of East Hartford, its boards and commissions and its officers, officials and employees.

The intended purpose of Town of East Hartford (“Town”) social media sites is to disseminate information from the Town, about the Town, to its residents and local businesses.

The Town of East Hartford has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the Town on Town social media sites. Any information disseminated on Town social media sites is public information.

For purposes of this policy, “social media” is understood to be content created by individuals using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include but are not limited to, Facebook,

Twitter, LinkedIn and Flickr. For purposes of this policy, “comments” include information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted on a Town of East Hartford social media site.

GENERAL POLICY

Use of Official Social Media

The establishment and use by any Town department or Town Board or Commission of Town social media sites are subject to approval by the Office of the Mayor. The Mayor’s communications officer will oversee and coordinate all official social media communications. All Town social media sites shall be exclusively administered by designated Town department employees or Town Board or Commission Members. Use of Town social media sites by Town boards and commissions, officers, officials and employees must also be in compliance with the [Town Information Systems Use Policy](#), the East Hartford Social Media Policy and the Town of East Hartford Code of Ethics.

In all instances, when a town employee posts to social media or responds to a comment in his or her capacity as a town employee, they should do so in the name of their department and shall not share personal information about himself or herself, or any other town employees. Board or Commission members may not comment on pending applications, open business, or approvals, other than to indicate the date and time of a public hearing or meeting.

When posting information on any of the Town’s social media sites, the designated person should at all times follow established content and content review guidelines as directed by the Mayor. Content should be respectful and professional. Employees representing the Town via Town social media must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Town and in accordance with all Town policies.

All content and communication with residents through the Town social media shall be conducted by designated individuals under the supervision of the Mayor’s communications officer. The Mayor shall approve all department employees and board or commission members to be designated as social media editors or content creators.

Town social media sites should make clear that they are maintained by the Town and that they follow East Hartford’s Social Media Policy. A link to the policy shall be prominently posted.

Wherever possible, Town social media sites should link back to the official Town of East Hartford website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the Town of East Hartford. The town's official website at www.easthartfordct.gov will remain the town's primary source of information.

The Mayor, or his/her communications officer, will monitor content on Town social media sites to ensure adherence to these guidelines, the Social Media Policy and the interests and goals of the Town of East Hartford.

The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of these guidelines, East Hartford's Social Media Policy, or any applicable law. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by the Town's Information Officer or his/her designee for a reasonable period of time in compliance with the Connecticut State Library's State Agencies Records Retention Disposition Schedule and any other applicable laws, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.

All Town social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies. The Town reserves the right to limit communication and posting and/or maintain a record of all such activities on social media as required/necessary to comply with these laws.

Town social media sites are subject to the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Town business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.

A public record may not be destroyed if any litigation, litigation hold notice, administrative review, or other action involving the communication is initiated before the record has been disposed of, even if its retention period has expired. The public record must be retained until the completion of the action, the resolution of all issues that arise from the action and approval by the Corporation Counsel's Office. In the event a litigation hold notice or order related to social media networking exists or is anticipated, then such notice or order shall supersede the minimum retention period as listed on the Connecticut State Library's State Agencies' Records Retention/Disposition Schedules.

Town of East Hartford Policy on Personal Use of Social Media by Employees

The Town does not restrict the right of its employees to exercise free speech however, employees are strictly forbidden from speaking in their official capacity or acting as a spokesperson for the town on any social media or internet site without the express permission of the Mayor.

Employees may not disclose the organization's confidential or protected information, including, but not limited to, town data, documents, emails, photographs, or similar information. Any posts by employees pertaining to confidential or protected information on social media or electronic forums will result in disciplinary actions.

Employees should avoid identifying themselves as town government workers, when posting on personal social media sites, particularly if their social media or on-line activities are inconsistent with, or could negatively impact the Town. Employees never have permission to speak on behalf of the town via social media without the consent of their Department Director or the Office of the Mayor. If the content of an employee's posts are related to their work for the town, employees should clearly indicate that their posts are their own opinion and do not reflect the positions or opinions of the Town of East Hartford.

If an employee participates in political and other public activities on their own time, they should not identify themselves as a Town representative without the prior approval of the Mayor or the Mayor's designee.

Town Employees must at all times follow the Town of East Hartford Employment Policies including, but not limited to, the Code of Ethics, American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Derogatory Remarks, Drug & Alcohol-free Workplace, Equal Employment Opportunity Plan, Information Systems Use, Personnel Communication Devices, Privacy Notice-HIPAA, Policy Prohibiting Harassment, and Workplace Threats and Violence when engaging in both personal and professional online and social media communications. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

These guidelines may be revised at any time, as may be reasonable under the circumstances. If you have any questions or concerns about the Town of East Hartford social media policy or its implementation, or if you find incorrect information or are interested in seeking permissions that fall outside of the guidelines above, please contact Theresa Buchanan, Human Resources Director.

Social Media Policy for Public Use

The Town is the sole owner and administrator of all its social media sites. For purposes of this policy, “social media” is understood to be content created by the Town of East Hartford using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include but are not necessarily limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, SnapChat and Flickr. Any individual accessing, browsing and using the Town’s social media sites accepts, without limitation or qualification, this Policy.

Reservation of Rights: The Town’s social media sites are limited public forms and are moderated and reviewed by Town staff. The Town reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to remove any posts that contain:

- profanity, discriminatory language, or inappropriate language;
- content that violates this policy;
- content that is deemed to not be in the best interest of the Town;
- political statements, including comments that endorse or oppose political candidates or ballot propositions;
- religious statements, including comments that endorse or oppose any type of religious opinions or activities;
- comments that promote, foster or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- comments that include vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, personal attacks or unsupported accusations;
- obscene or sexual content, links to obscene or sexual content posts, or links concerning illegal activity or encouragement of illegal activity;
- information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party (including but not limited to music, photographs, intellectual property, trademarks, logos, designs, videos, writings, sayings, cartoons and images);
- pictures or videos of adults or children without express legal consent;
- Town employee or official’s names;

- for profit posts or advertisements;
- content that is confidential, contains personal information, or not public under the Connecticut Freedom of Information act; and information that is not related in some way to the Town of East Hartford.

In all instances, the Town reserves the right to block, or otherwise deny access to town social media sites to any person who violates this policy, at any time and without prior notice.

Please understand:

- These social media sites cannot and should not be used as substitutes for 911.
- All Town social media content are public records and subject to disclosure under Connecticut Freedom of Information Laws (FOIA).
- The Town assumes no liability for any inaccuracies the social media sites may contain, and does not guarantee that the sites will be uninterrupted, permanent, error free or safe from viruses or malware. In all instances, use of these sites is at the user's risk.
- All users of the Town's Social Media sites are also subject to the site's own privacy policy. For example, if you are using the Town's Facebook page, you are subject to this policy and the general Facebook policies. The Town of East Hartford has no control over a third party site's privacy policy. The Town also has no control over, and does not endorse content, commercial advertisement, political statements or other postings produced by the social media site that may appear on the Town's site.
- 3rd party comments posted on town social media sites are the sole opinion of the commenter or poster and do not imply the Town's endorsement of or agreement with said content.
- All information and materials generated by the Town of East Hartford and provided on the Town's social media sites are the property of The Town of East Hartford. The Town retains copyright on text, graphic images and other content that was produced by the Town of East Hartford and found on the page.
- Commercial use of text, Town logos, photos and other graphics is prohibited without the express written permission of the Town of East Hartford. Use of the Town logo or seal is prohibited for any non-governmental purpose. Any person reproducing or redistributing a third party copyright, trademark, trade name, patent or similar intellectual property must adhere to the terms and conditions of the third party owner.
- This policy may be amended without prior notice.

Communications Public Inventory

The following are the current communication methods utilized by the Town of East Hartford on a daily basis:

Platform	Link	Purpose	Admin	Timeframe
Website	www.easthartfordct.gov	Official Town of East Hartford website serves as the main source of information for citizens in a mobile-friendly, easily accessible way. The website allows us to connect with residents while ensuring they are well-informed at all times.	Mayor's Office Department directors & designees	Updated 2021
Facebook	Town of East Hartford - Government	Town of East Hartford uses social media to connect and interact with the target audience, consisting of residents, visitors, public officials and town employees. The Mayor's office is the main admin of all seven municipal pages with the goal to inform the residents of important information in a timely manner and gather their feedback.	Mayor's Office	est. 2016
	Mayor Mike Walsh		Mayor's Office	Est. 2021
	Mayor Marcia Leclerc – Archive		Mayor's Office	est. 2016
	East Hartford Police Department		Mayor's Office	est. 2011
	East Hartford Fire Department		Mayor's Office EH Fire ○ Kevin Munson	est. 2018

	East Hartford Parks and Recreation		Mayor's Office Parks and Rec <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jon Cooper (editor) ○ Sharon O'Neil (editor) 	Est 2017
	East Hartford Youth Services		Mayor's Office EH Youth Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jen King ○ Mac Bassos ○ Cephus Nolen 	Est 2010
	East Hartford Public Library		Mayor's Office East Hartford Public Library <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sarah Morgan ○ Rebecca Livaich ○ Catherine Potter ○ Rolande Duprey ○ Anna Eisen ○ Jason Pannone 	Est 2012
	East Hartford Animal Control		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACO Jillian Cappabianca 	Est. 2020
Twitter	https://twitter.com/easthartfordfd?lang=en	East Hartford Fire Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EH Fire ○ Kevin Munson 	Est. 2018
	https://twitter.com/EastHartfordPD	East Hartford Police Department	Linked to the Facebook page	2011

Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/ehplmakerspace/	East Hartford Public Library Makerspace	Linked to Facebook page	2021
Q-Alert "My East Hartford"	https://www.easthartfordct.gov/home/news/town-of-east-hartford-launches-a-new-service-request-platform	The platform streamlines and manages resident requests for service, allowing staff and the public to smoothly track case progress and receive updates. "My East Hartford" is available for smartphone users in the App Store and Google Play as well as on our mobile-friendly Town website, allowing citizens to choose their preferred way of staying connected with the Town and being able to easily submit your requests for service in accordance with our mission statement and goals.	Mayor's Office	Est. 2016
Everbridge "East Hartford Alert network"	https://www.easthartfordct.gov/emergency-management/pages/east-hartford-alert-network	The East Hartford Alert Network uses public data from the white pages and yellow pages to make location based notifications to the public for life-threatening emergencies. The East Hartford Alert Network is subscription based, opt-out Critical Event Management platform that helps organizations manage the full lifecycle of a critical event: Assess risks and determine which are relevant to your assets and people; Locate mobile and traveling employees, as well as responders, who are near or traveling to areas of risk; Act to automate standard operating procedures to launch and manage incident response; and Analyze performance to identify bottlenecks and improve response for subsequent events.	Mayor's Office, Fire Department, Police Department	Est. 2015
Digital Display Board "Kiosk"		Digital display system, used to draw the attention of motorists and pedestrians to important announcements, messages, programs and services strategically placed on the digital display.	Mayor's Office	Est. 2017
Press Releases Print Media	https://www.easthartfordct.gov/node/111/news	Press releases are tradition way of delivering important information to citizens and they reinforce a positive and consistent way between the Town of East	To maintain a consistent approach to information	Est. 2014 (centralization)

		<p>Hartford and the local media. This interaction is critical to maintaining a consistent outreach to the community through media channels. Press releases are emailed to the media on a daily basis and become available on the website under “news and announcements,” which then are shared on social media.</p> <p>Press releases are distributed to an established core of media outlets, which include radio, print and digital.</p>	<p>distribution, tone of voice and formatting when communicating with residents and alleviate duplication of efforts, press releases for all 14 departments in the Town of East Hartford are administered through the Mayor’s office. Directors are asked to forward drafts of their releases or detailed information to the Mayor’s office for formatting, and distribution to the media.</p>	
Annual Report	https://www.easthartfordct.gov/mayors-office/pages/annual-reports	<p>Issued each year, the Annual Report is a longstanding tradition in East Hartford as it celebrates our successes and new programs, and looks back at achievements of the past year. This year, the report is dedicated to the wonderful community that contributes to making our Town a vibrant and appealing place to live, work and thrive; and highlights the positive community engagement efforts that we have focused on this year.</p>	<p>Mayor’s Office</p>	

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, any communications made via online platforms in an official municipal capacity are considered “public records.” The Town of East Hartford understands the value of preserving public records and archives all online communications through PageFreezer: Website and Social Media Archiving Software and it can be accessed at any time.

Basic Step-by-Step Communication Process - applies **to all** public events, programs and services.

1. Department Director communicates any event/policy change/new service or program information to the Mayor.
2. Department meets, finalizes, produces a plan of action, important info to the public and shares that information with the Mayor's Office either in a bulleted form or a draft press release.
3. When working on a long-lasting event/important event/program/service, contact the Mayor's Office to strategize expanded outreach options.
4. Staff in the Mayor's office finalizes and formats the draft press release. Concurrently, communication liaison updates their department's web page with this information in various locations (news and announcement, bulletin, calendar item), as appropriate, while working on social media messaging, if applicable.
5. Once formatted, the Mayor's office will release the information to our vetted media contact list. Communication liaison will be copied in that email.
6. The Mayor's office will work to incorporate additional communication tools for publicity as needed in coordination with communication liaisons.
7. If a press release is a legal requirement/grant obligation, please inform the Mayor's Office, an ad may need to be taken out to secure its publication.

The Mayor's Office cannot control the media and what they publish. Stories are run based on the available space the publication has, the interest it draws, and the timing of receipt. That is why it is so important to utilize the communication platforms that we do have control over to make sure information there is visible, accessible and clear.

Communication tools:

1. **Website Updates**
 - a. **News and Announcement**

- Serves as an archive of information for staff and the public
 - Gives residents easy access to town information in accordance with SEO best practices. A.K.A shows up in “google search”
 - Each department has a website admin who is trained on its use and best practices. The admin is responsible for updating their department’s page with news, information, events and graphics
- b. **Bulletin graphic on the website** – visual representation of a news and announcement
- Draws attention to important and long-lasting programs
- c. **Event on the website**
- Serves as a calendar
 - Highlights event information in accordance with SEO best practices and analytics
 - Centralizes all town events and meetings in one place
- d. **Web-form** (registration form)
- Allows for a two-way communication with the public when their response is needed (i.e. RSVPs to a program/event).

2. **Kiosk Digital Display Board/digital bulletin board-Town Green**

- Draws attention of drivers, pedestrians/locals and visitors to larger programs, important announcements
- When requested, the Mayor’s office creates the graphics based on website graphics and news and announcements

3. **Social media**

- When sharing information on the town’s event/program, the post should include a link to that program, event, or service directly from the Town website. There should be **minimal** social media posts that are **not** linked to the posting

on the website, with an exception of situations when information is shared from an outside trusted agency & organization.

- Social media allows us to reach wider audience, but we shouldn't assume that it is our only audience. By isolating event, program, and services promotion to social media only actually limits the audience that gets notified of an event, program, or service, leaving those who stay off of social media unaware.
- Sharing the news & announcement link to social media encourages people to visit the town website, provides more information to residents, answers their questions, demonstrates the official source of information, makes information searchable following best SEO practices
- Postings need to be mobile-friendly and searchable – no PDF or standalone images. **Example:** posting an image of a flyer with a lot of text on social media **is not** effective.
- Feedback on social media **is not** a guarantee of success/failure of an event, and **does not** represent an accurate estimate of participants. If exact count is needed, it can be done in conjunction with our website by creating a registration form (webform).
- In cases of higher importance or when an event needs more attention, there might be a need to run a Facebook ad to reach wider targeted audience. Please contact the Mayor's office if this feature needs to be utilized.

4. EH ALERT

- Allows for emergent/non-emergent communication to the public via robo-calls, emails, texts.

TOWN COUNCIL MAJORITY OFFICE
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

JANUARY 27, 2020

PRESENT Don Bell, Temporary Chair and Councillor Angie Parkinson

ABSENT Councillor Pat Harmon

CALL TO ORDER

Temporary Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

Chair

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
seconded by Don Bell
to **appoint Don Bell** as **Chair**
of the Community Engagement Committee.
Motion carried 2/0.

Secretary

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by Angie Parkinson
to **appoint Angie Parkinson** as **Secretary**
of the Community Engagement Committee.
Motion carried 2/0.

ADOPTION OF RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
seconded by Don Bell
to **adopt** Robert's Rules of Order as the rules that shall govern
parliamentary procedure at all subcommittee meetings, with the exception
that (1) the Chair shall not be required to restate the motion of any
Council member unless requested by another Councillor, or when in the
discretion of the Chair, such restatement is necessary to avoid any
confusion as to the motion; and (2) where such rules are in conflict with
the provisions of the State Statutes, the Town Charter, or Town
Ordinances.
Motion carried 2/0.

ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETING DATES

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
seconded by Don Bell
to **hold** meetings at the **call** of the Chair.
Motion carried 2/0.

STORAGE OF RECORDS

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Don Bell
 to **store** records in the Town Council office.
 Motion carried 2/0.

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

None

NEW BUSINESS

Structure and Goals of the Community Engagement Committee

Don Bell, the newly appointed Chair, shared his vision for the future of this Committee. He employs the concept that “an effective government is a responsive government” to the diverse community that East Hartford is and envisions a new civic culture of awareness between the Town Council and its residents. Chair Bell explained that he would like this Committee to accomplish three things: (1) mentoring a full representation of the town’s Boards and Commissions; (2) establishing new methods of listening to the concerns of residents in all the different areas of town; and (3) developing a comprehensive report of methods of communication with the residents. He plans to start a schedule of meetings with residents at local eateries and to begin community walks that will induce residents to interact with the Council.

Angie Parkinson, the newly appointed Secretary, suggested the Committee formulate an on-line survey, which would give residents a more active role in the meeting locations with the Council, as well as providing them with an opportunity to invite Councillors to events that are of importance to them.

It was the consensus of the Committee to hold a workshop in February to discuss these ideas with the full Council.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Don Bell
 to **adjourn** at 6:30 p.m.
 Motion carried 2/0.

C: Town Council
 Mayor Leclerc

TOWN COUNCIL MAJORITY OFFICE
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 13, 2020

PRESENT Vice Chair Donald Bell, Jr., Majority Leader Sebrina Wilson, Minority Leader Esther B. Clarke, Councillors Connor Martin, Angela Parkinson, Awet Tsegai and John Morrison

ABSENT Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Councillor Patricia Harmon

ALSO Susan Kniep
PRESENT Don Sugalski

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bell began the workshop at 5:03 p.m.

DISCUSSION

Goals for the Community Engagement Committee

Chair Bell led a conversation on the different outreach options that would have the most impact on the community. Also discussed were the various ways to engage the residents in a “community conversation”.

It was decided that the CEC would meet once per quarter at a location to be determined. The schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday March 24th 6pm
- Saturday June 20th Noon
- Tuesday Sept 22nd 6pm
- Saturday Dec 5th Noon

Susan Kniep, 50 Olde Roberts Street, made suggestions to the Committee on how best to connect with the residents.

The workshop ended at 6:03 p.m.